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**THE KEYSTONE CENTER REPORTS FINDINGS OF  
ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT DIALOGUE**

The Keystone Center today released its final report describing the efforts and conveying the findings of a working group formed to address issues related to the habitat provisions of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This full report follows Keystone's February 17, 2006 letter to six U.S. senators (Lincoln Chaffee, Hillary Clinton, Mike Crapo, James Inhofe, James Jeffords and Blanche Lincoln) which summarized the findings of the working group.

The working group, which met from November 2005 through February 2006, found that it should be possible for Congress to take steps that would improve the Act's effectiveness for species at risk, make government activities more efficient and reduce the concerns of regulated parties.

In May 2005, the six senators noted above asked The Keystone Center to convene a diverse group of interests to seek consensus regarding the complex and controversial habitat provisions of the Act. In response, The Keystone Center assembled a group of 23 environmental and regulated sector interests, scientists and legal scholars to take up what has become a divisive and frequently litigated issue.

While agreeing that the Endangered Species Act could do a more effective job of protecting the habitat that plants and animals at risk need to recover, the group grappled with various ideas about how improvement could best be accomplished. In so doing, the working group addressed three areas: Increasing the effectiveness of the incentives; a greater focus on developing useful, credible species recovery plans; and potential revisions to the existing Section 7 consultation standard. The participants agreed on a number of important principles they felt would productively guide any consensus-based revisions to the Act as well as a number of specific recommendations regarding the use of incentives related to Farm Bill measures, voluntary cooperative agreements, tax provisions and streamlining.

"We applaud the group for its many hours of fine work on an extraordinarily vexing and complex issue," said Peter Adler, President of The Keystone Center. "Although the individuals in this group came to the table with significantly different perspectives, they engaged in imaginative and productive discussions," Adler added. "Neither the ESA nor its difficulties will disappear anytime soon," Adler noted, "however, we think the group has narrowed differences and offered some thoughtful ideas that should help Congress as it considers the future of the Act."

The full text of the report and an executive summary, as well as a complete list of working group participants and background on the dialogue, can be viewed on The Keystone Center's website ([www.keystone.org](http://www.keystone.org)). In addition to its work convening key leaders on the Endangered Species Act, The Keystone Center for Science and Public Policy has engaged in dialogues on chemical weapons destruction, federal facilities siting, and mining clean-up, as well as childhood obesity.

**The Keystone Center**

The Keystone Center is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1975 to help facilitate cross-sector dialogues on pressing environment, energy, and public health issues. The Keystone Center does not take positions or advocate particular points of view. Instead, it convenes meetings on issues and tries to facilitate practical, consensus-based solutions that break old logjams or that avert unnecessary future science and public policy battles. [www.keystone.org](http://www.keystone.org)

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